

Ravalli

County  
MONTANA

# RAVALLI COUNTY ATTORNEY

George H. Corn, County Attorney  
T. Geoffrey Mahar, Chief Deputy  
John Bell, Deputy  
Karen Mahar, Deputy  
William E. Fulbright, Deputy  
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RECEIVED

DEC 18 2007

December 18, 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Ravalli County Commissioners

Administration Building

**Re: Beaverhead-Deer Lodge Partnership / Opportunity for the Bitterroot**


Dear Commissioners:

As we all know, the issue of forest management is a matter that dramatically affects the citizens of Ravalli County. You may be aware of the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge Partnership that holds great promise for long overdue resolution of critical forest management issues. The Partnership is comprised of conservation groups and timber groups, who have realized that by working together, the interest of both, as well as that of the general public, can be addressed. The Partnership's strategy calls for linking timber harvest and forest restoration through the use of stewardship contracts, at the same time significantly increasing the amount of designated wilderness. This is an idea of great merit.

On July 6, 2006, I sent a letter of support for the Partnership's plan to Gail Kimble, who at that time was Regional Forester for the Northern Region. Now, the Partnership has proposed draft legislation for the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge in order to carry out their strategy. I will be writing our Congressional delegation voicing my support of the proposed legislation. The Partnership provides us with a model that should be pursued for the Bitterroot National Forest.

Last month two members of the Partnership were invited to speak in Missoula regarding the plan because of its promise. I believe we should likewise invite the Partnership to make a same presentation to the public here in Ravalli County. Given the interest and importance of the topic, I believe such a presentation would be well attended. I will be happy to help arrange or facilitate the presentation. Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
George H. Corn  
Ravalli County Attorney  
GHC/dp

cc: Beaverhead-Deer Lodge Partnership Members  
Interested Parties

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July 6, 2006

Gail Kimball, Regional Forester  
Northern Region Office  
Federal Building  
200 East Broadway  
P.O. Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807

Re: Beaverhead National Forest Plan

Dear Ms. Kimball:

As a Ravalli County attorney, I have been extremely interested in the partnership proposal that was offered as a compromise in the above plan. On May 17, 2006, I sent the attached letter to the conservation groups involved. I also applaud those representatives of the timber industry for their efforts in reaching this compromise. This plan holds great promise not only for the Beaverhead National Forest, but for other national forests in Montana, which could use it as a model. I particularly encourage you to allow the Forest Service supervisor to go to the public with a supplemental EIS containing the partnership proposal. This would allow public comment on this important matter and give this idea the chance it needs to succeed.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

George Corn,  
Ravalli County Attorney  
GHC/jw  
Enclosure

cc: Ravalli County Commissioners  
Bruce Farling, Trout Unlimited  
Tom France, Conservations Issues Expert, National Wildlife Federation  
John Gatchell, Conservation Director, Montana Wildlife Association



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May 17, 2006

Bruce Farling  
Trout Unlimited  
P.O. Box 7186  
Missoula, MT 59807

John Gatchell, Conservation Director  
Montana Wildlife Association  
30 South Ewing  
Helena, MT 59601

Tom France, Conservation Issues Expert  
National Wildlife Federation  
240 North Higgins, Suite #2  
Missoula, MT 59802

Re: Beaverhead National Forest

Gentlemen:

I have followed with great interest your organizations' commendable efforts to resolve the wilderness/timber issue on the Beaverhead National Forest. If there is any chance of working on a similar proposal for the Bitterroot National Forest, I will help in any way that I can. As you know, the Bitterroot National Forest is rewriting their forest service plan and I believe it is still in the preliminary stages.

Sincerely,

George Corn,  
Ravalli County Attorney  
GHC/jw